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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/611,404	06/30/2003	Claus Hoffjann	4532	1920

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EXAMINER

FORTUNA, ANA M

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

1723

DATE MAILED: 03/23/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/611,404

Applicant(s)

HOFFJANN ET AL.

Examiner

Ana M. Fortuna

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 January 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-32 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 27-32 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-26 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 30 June 2003 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- 1) ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - 2) ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - 3) ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:
 - I. Claims 1-26, drawn to a method of preparing fuel to be used in a fuel cell, classified in class 210, subclass 652.
 - II. Claims 27-32, drawn to an apparatus for preparing fuel in combination with the fuel cell, classified in class 429, subclass 17.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

2. Inventions I and II are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another and materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In this case the apparatus structure is not limited to the particular emulsion composition, and can therefore be use in preparing emulsions of distinct composition to be processed in the fuel cell system.
3. Because these inventions are independent or distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art in view of their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.
4. Newly submitted claims 27-32 directed to an invention that is independent or distinct from the invention originally claimed for the reasons discussed above

Since applicant has received an action on the merits for the originally presented invention, this invention has been constructively elected by original presentation for

prosecution on the merits. Accordingly, claims 27-32 are withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention. See 37 CFR 1.142(b) and MPEP § 821.03.

5. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

DETAILED ACTION

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action, dated 8/2/05, which is maintained. Claim 26 (new) substantially includes the limitations of claim 1, and can be grouped together to the rejection of paragraph 2.

Response to Arguments

8. Applicant's arguments filed 1/4/06, and 12/5/05 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. The previous rejection is maintained. Applicant argues that claims 1 as amended, e.g. excluding distillation, is in conditions for allowance, and

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further states that the first step of the process, e.g. the wastewater pretreatment is not critical to the invention (see section 4)); in section 5) applicant states that the process in the present invention does not required highly purified water. Applicant, however, treats the waste water by combining different water treatment steps, including reverse osmosis membrane, which inherently generates highly pure or pure water, which can meet the conditions required by the water of Varadaraj (US 6,736,887). Furthermore, patent '887 teaches cleaning or filtering the water, e.g. by ion exchange, which does not exclude producing water within the quality of the water produced in step a) of claim 1.

Treating water from any source and filtering to produce water with lower low of contamination as required in patent '887 it would have been obvious t one skilled in the art because water or certain level of cleanability is suggested in the reference, and it will avoid contamination of the produce gases in the fuel cell. Regarding to arguments in section 8), the gas formation is inherently produce in the cell converter, which as disclosed in patent the Hsu ('185), includes catalytic material not only as part of the electrodes, but also as part of the cells (see paragraph bridging columns 6-7).

Regarding to arguments on section 9), and 17) applicant admits that the emulsified fuel in reference '887 does not exclude the presence of sulfur, therefore, the processing in the fuel cell of 'patent '185, including the sulfur removal section, as discussed in the rejection above is proper. Applicant specification is not limited to a specific fuel cell structure other than height temperature fuel cell, which meets the conditions of reference '185, also considered "high temperature fuel cell", which has catalytic sections and electrodes. For this reasons the rejection is maintained.

Conclusion

9. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

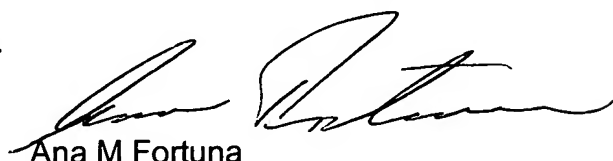
A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ana M. Fortuna whose telephone number is (571) 272-1141. The examiner can normally be reached on 9:30-6:00 M-F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Wanda L. Walker can be reached on (571) 272-1151. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ana M Fortuna', is positioned above the printed name.

Ana M Fortuna
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1723

AF
March 17, 2003